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Happy Saturday, Farm Friends!

We're a little off schedule this week -- trying to balance the hip rehab with farm stuff -- oh yeah, and the Organic Inspection! Things got a little discombobulated.



Our [American Beautyberry](#) (*Callicarpa americana*) shows off its lovely fruit. This sweet plant is still waiting to be planted in the yard -- but that will be a good winter task. This native plant is a member of the Mint family (a whiff of its fragrant leaves will hint at that fact), and it grows well in our area. We purchased our plant at Cobblestone from [Bashavia Gardens](#) -- they specialize in plants that are native to our area. I'm looking forward to seeing this beauty grow and flourish in our yard. Bonus: they are supposed to repel deer -- maybe we should surround the farm with these bushes!

We're getting into a different seasonal rhythm here at the farm. Since we're not harvesting or tending crops like we were last month, we can now focus on getting ready for another season.



Clearing the fields and high tunnels of plant material is a priority. We don't want to create cozy environments for pests and create a problem for next year. And we also want to be able to add compost and manure to the beds to boost the nutrients and organic matter of the soil.

The timing on this is critical because the National Organic Program has very [specific rules regarding the use of manure](#) in vegetable production. Manure must be incorporated into the soil at least 90 or 120 days before harvest, depending on the type of crop. Yes -- we want to feed the soil, and we want to do it with food safety as the utmost priority!

It is always hard to see our lush, productive plantings turn into crispy, dead plants. :( But getting it all cleaned up, moves us closer to being ready for a new year! It's a cycle -- every ending is the beginning of something new.



One bonus of cleaning up Ajo, Jonny collected zillions of marigold seeds! We'll scatter them in some pollinator strips next year and use them for seed-starting for the Plant Sale!





### **Mr. Fix-It's Dream Job!**



In the Winter, farmers get a chance to take care of all the things that couldn't be done in the Summer. All Summer long we'll look at something that needs to be improved or repaired, and we'll say, "That's a Winter project." Well, winter is here (almost!)

Ray and Jonny were able to take advantage of Friday's milder weather to repair the little bump-out storage on the greenhouse (we call it "The Confessional" because that's kinda what it looks like!). During Helene, the wind ripped the roof off this structure and water had penetrated it pretty badly. While working on this, Ray could see how badly rotten the exterior plywood is on the greenhouse. Another opportunity to use those fix-it skills!

### **Visit with Santa Ginger**

The Holiday Spirit was on great display when Ray paid a visit to Dr. Gouchen Yang and his team at NC A&T University. Dr. Yang invited Ray to come by to pick up some ginger from their harvest this fall -- and what a haul it was! Thanks, Santa Ginger!



### **More Plant Trays Diverted from Landfill!**

While Ray was in Greensboro to visit Dr. Yang, he made a quick detour to drop off a big load of greenhouse seed trays and pots at the Piedmont Triad Farmers Market on Sandy Ridge Road. We'll be making another trip down there in the new year to check to see if any nurseries have dumped those wonderful plant carrying trays that we (and you) love. A couple

of years ago, we got several hundred of them right around the beginning of January!



### Organic Inspection Update!

We met with the Organic Inspector on Tuesday and we are happy to report that everything went well. There were no findings, and the inspector seemed to think our records and farm were in good order! Whew!

The inspector doesn't give us a pass or fail -- he or she simply asks the questions, inspects the fields and buildings, collects the data and prepares a report for our certifier. Our certifier will then notify us of their determination. Feeling optimistic about the outcome!

### Need Some Gifts? Shop Local! Shop Organic!

If you are trying to find a gift for the person who has everything -- or someone who just likes food, plants or learning about growing things, consider one of our e-Gift Cards.



These cards are in any amount that you'd like and can be purchased online and emailed or texted to the recipient. You can even print it out and wrap it up old school for the lucky person!

The e-Gift cards can be used at our booth at Cobblestone Farmers Market or at our on-farm events such as Plant Sales or classes. [Here's a link to purchase](#) a card for a friend -- or yourself!

Thanks for supporting a small, local Organic farm! Don't hesitate to contact us if you have questions: [farm@plumgrannyfarm.com](mailto:farm@plumgrannyfarm.com).

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That's all we've got for you this week, Friends!

The list of Holiday Happenings just keeps on coming! One thing we are looking forward to is the performance of Lessons and Carols at [King Moravian Church](#) on Sunday (12/15 at 11:00 am or 4:00 pm). This musical event is a gift from King Moravian to the community. Both the chorus and orchestra are comprised of church members, community members and professional musicians. It is a moving performance that kicks off the Christmas season perfectly.



If you are looking for more ideas, check out [Best of Winston](#) or a new local event tracker, [The Go-To Winston-Salem](#). Both of these sites have weekly newsletters to keep you informed about all the cool things happening in our region!

P.S. Enjoy tonight's [Full Moon](#)!

**Be kind to your neighbors.**  
**Until next week,**  
***Cheryl & Ray***

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